Informant:	**LMP-S2**	**Spanish**
Date:	**11-18-00**	**Mini DV**
Interviewer:	**Claudia Hernandez**	
Transcriber:	**?**	

CH: So last time I asked all those questions about the 'Misa' but I also brought a list of herbs, the names of herbs to see if you know them and also I have a list of sicknesses, like stomach ache, ear ache, to see what you would recommend, because the last time I interviewed you, you let me know that you know a lot about plants and so I said to myself, I'm going to ask him more. Let's start with the Misa.

S2: If you would have gone this Monday you would have liked it, this Monday was better.

CH: You have a Misa every Monday?

S2: Yes

CH: And last time we asked you what it was for and you said it was for development, is it always the same topic or does it change?

S2: It depends you change it accordingly to the differences in people that arrive, so there are things, topics you touch upon differently, like how you are supposed to give a doctrine, what we are doing and to what do we owe it to, like last Monday it was very brief, we spoke of on what we base spiritism, like when you are working-making that development any movement, any noise, any fly that you might see in your imagination, because it's your interior, you have to be conscious of and not let pass by without thought because that could be very meaningful any little detail, you cant limit yourself you cant be thinking that your crazy, from there one begins to see the reality, you have to differentiate reality from the spiritual it's a bit a confusing and a bit strong because, the spirit told me like this, "not everything you see is true, and not all you hear is true"

CH: The spirit told you that?

S2: Yes

CH: This past Monday?

S2: No, previously when I began in the spiritual journey. You cannot become a fanatic of yourself, and you have to be your own judge because there will be things that present in front of you that perhaps are not real. For example there are spirits that like to play and cause problems, they like to make fun of you and the patient, the spirit could tell you he is a spirit of light, a good spirit, but he may just be causing you problems, so that's what we were talking about that day so I was telling them to not feel bad for what they saw or what they didn't see or feel, because there are many ways to express it, I told them. So I ask them what it was they saw.

CH: After the mountain?

S2: yes because some entered and some didn't, some saw something and others didn't, some saw a person some didn't, so I explain to them why that is, what is that mountain, what is that they are seeing, the way they see the mountain is the way they are in inside, on that I base myself, because that mountain, that in which you begin to enter is you. That's you, when you find that cavern, that's you, when you enter that cavern that's you that you are entering, you are going in to find your spirit, to find your own self.

CH: That's very interesting because when you told us that we visualize our mountain, I visualized a mountain in El Salvador that has very much significance in the folklore of the country and spiritual because many time the folklore and the spiritual are linked…

S2: Of course

CH: and Izalco, I don't know if you have heard of it, but it's a mountain of sand, it's a volcano of sand and I have read histories of it and I've heard told stories of Izalco, and when I went there I went to see it and so it was the first thing that came to mind.

S2: That's good because it's good to focus on things you already know or places that you already know because it becomes easier for you. Very similarly a this girl told me that she had some land in Mexico and that there is a cavern there just like the one I described to her so she focused on that, and I told her that was better because then its not as hard. I'm not really interested in the mountain, I'm interested in you entering in that cavern, I'm making you focus on that mountain because in that mountain there has to be a cave, so that's your mountain and there is your cave, this is your cave that is where your spirit is or your feelings-what ever you want to call it, that's where it is, so on entering, some say that they see a sick person.

CH: I wasn't able to see anything…

S2: So then I tell them it's your spirit that is sick, it's your spirit that needs peace, so one begins to guide themselves on this. Or on what you where given, because sometimes when you get there you are given something, the spirit gives you something, the old man that you see or whatever you see shows you something, it gives you something in your hands, and I tell them to observe it and not to say what it is! That's something that was given to you only not for you to tell others, so we spoke of that but in this next Misa I want to talk about the Commandments of spiritism and what they refer to, because like I say, we many times know things, when I'm working in the spiritual I see you as a dog that's chasing it's tail, it's not that it you, but simply that the spirit never speaks directly, he puts a parabola and example and so I tell them that, that means that you are chasing around yourself trying to do something and you cant find the door, so you are confused trying to do something, going around in circles in the same place, you have to open your mind to other things to other possibilities, sometimes in one word you can say a lot, Jesus said that it was for the understanding of each person so that all could hear, that all those who had ears could hear, so I explained to them a little about how Jesus spoke as he preached…the parabola of the seed, when he was preaching and he was with the fisherman and he told them that there was a reaper, so it's the same, so what is he saying about the seed? That the seed grew in the stone so basically it means that there were

hearts in which he grew roots and made grow and then other where some with other religions or beliefs came and that seed did not sprout.

CH: It's figurative

S2: Yes, but it was for each person to understand, so that from the dumbest to the most intelligent could understand, so that's what spiritism is all about, so spiritism helps you for your own well being as well as for others well being so I also explained to them that not everything…that we should not abuse of our knowledge that we can not use it for personal use or for the making fun of someone else, so I read them a paragraph of what spiritism requires.

CH: Also, what you pray, are those catholic prayers…

S2: Catholic!

CH: is that where the mixture comes into play?

S2: Yes, it's all catholic, it's all based on His doctrine, like this last Monday that we went I began to invoke the Holy Spirit because that day that we did the Misa?? We didn't invoke the Holy spirit, so this time I asked…well I did the prayer and I began to ask that if he had left that written and I had told him that wherever two or three of us happen to be congregated under his name that He would be present. That his spirit would be present in each one of us so I began to do the prayer and ask, I told Him that we were there in his name and we wanted to feel his presence and we wanted to feel Him in each one of us, we wanted him to take us spiritually, so when you feel the vibration of the spirit that is close it's then that I tell them that they have to ask for their personal problems, their families, for their sick, that he make us better sons, better family, better brothers or even just better for our own self…

CH: …(inaudible)…[long pause] …another question I had…for example when she went into trance, she…(inaudible)…When you were both 'cleaning'(limpieza) yourselves she would tell your spirit that he should come down or else leave you alone but that he should 'clean'(limpieza) you well, so then spirits clean you when they enter your body?

S2: Yes, they come to get rid of impurities, bad energy, or it's a way of doing away with negative energy and to clean us of our personal problems, or family problems, Obstacles in other words.

CH: So they clean! In every Misa do you always do limpias, because you did limpias to all of us?

S2: Yeah, well since your invoking spirits so then any…When there is a Misa any spirit can make it's self present so it can poses any person. That's why we have to clean people to do away with all that negative energy that is trying to enter, because we are opening a door we are inviting that they enter. It's like when you play the Ouija Board, it's the same, you are inviting opening a door, but not us because since we pray…there is a guide or the president of the table, that happens to be me because I conduct the Misa, I have to

be aware of all that is happening. I am always aware of what happens there because I have to be observing with each person there, I need to be alert, there have been moments where I have been distracted and if I get distracted there could be something bad with a person or a spirit might enter that is not welcomed.

CH: So spirits don't enter into the people that are there?

S2: They can enter,

CH: has that happened?

S2: Yes, that's why…or even one of your guides can come without you even knowing you had that power because it's already happened to me with people I put to meditate and all of a sudden the spirit begins to take them and so I'm the one watching over, what I do is to give light to the spirit, I welcome him, or "light and progress to you brother, whoever you are, would you like to give your name?" or "do you have a message for one of the brothers?" or "for your own do you want to give a message, welcome brother, come in"
So sometimes they are spirits that come to do good so … one time I had to do a Misa next to me here, and this girl is very spiritual but she had never captured the trance so when we were in the session she went into trance and began cleaning every body there and so one goes around making sure that the body does not hurt itself, so that it doesn't trip or fall and she began to…there was a guy they were gonna operate because of his heart, she didn't know that, and she began to clean him and when she got to the heart area she began to hit his heart as if wanting it to make it work…so these are things that are a bit weird because you ask yourself, "how can that happen?" but in the book it talks a lot about that, the scientist was given the microscope and all those instruments so that he could see so He gave us the spirit…many of the scientists have been gifted with things of the spirit, they have been given a medium for their spiritual gift, so it's something that is proved, although many times we don't wish to accept it, there are things…for you to know that someone is sick in the heart like she did where she began to beat on his heart without knowing…I was the only one that knew and I hadn't told her. So that's how one begins to believe and to see what exists…one time a lady came that was about 70 plus years old and she also went into trance and it was in the morning Misa on a Sunday, when the spirit took her she was transformed completely and….the lady began to change, because your face will changes, your body changes depending on the spirit that takes you it will change your way of being, the way you act and the lady began to say that she was very cold, and that spirit when it comes down comes down with lots of cold so you have to have something to cover her with and so when I was taking in spirits I didn't want to take it because it's to feminine.

CH: But that's your spirit guide, a woman right?

S2: Yes

CH: What did you call her?

S2: The Gypsy and she comes down very feminine so I get very embarrassed when there are people around that don't know about the spirits because you begin to go through a transformation so it's no longer you its him and it begins to do things or say things that are a bit embarrassing…

CH: That's interesting because to me, many people that know about spirits that I have masculine guides, for example when you told me about my Grandfather or of an indigenous person or a little dark person, I don't know if it's my Grandfather or what but I've always had that image in my head that sometimes when I dream I see that image and he's an indigenous person and I always have the indigenous images in my head that have come to me since I was really small and so I thought they were my guides and they are masculine.

S2: Yes, because…the one that came down that day was one of her guides, she is a black woman, but her major guide is a black man and that black man is very strong so she begins to do things like a man…because the woman is already old and for her to carry you on her back that is no longer her…so that's when the spirit does it's things because it already has taken over your matter it's no longer you it's him who is in control, he's the one taking on the weight of the person on the back…you might be weak but he is within you and so he is your strength in that moment.

CH: It was very interesting, for example after she had accepted the trance, she was a bit different, after having the spirit in her for sometime, and she looked tired…

S2: Yes, because it's the strength of the spirit that leaves you tired, hurt, injured,

CH: But clean?

S2: Yes, because it leaves you more relaxed, because…the spirit enters and so it adjusts to your body it's an energy that adjust to your body and materializes in you and of course you feel tired or hurt. You are left very charged with energy…sometimes you cant sleep, she sometimes cant sleep from all the energy that is left in her body, I slept like a baby but not her, sometimes that's what we need to relax.

CH: That you needed Gardenia's and White roses but you were missing white roses so you substituted them with the …(inaudible)…and the red ones, but that doesn't matter much?

S2: No, because it's like an offering

CH: so it would be better to have the white ones?

S2: Yes, or if not what you can find, it's a like showing appreciation, a payment, like giving something in return.

CH: And the Gardenias why do you use them?

S2: It doesn't matter, it could be any flower, but…you know there are some spirits that prefer certain flowers because they liked it when they were alive, their favorite flower or something, they still feel like they are materialized, so they still want to feel that aroma or that flower, so that's why we give them the flowers.

CH: is there some significance to the yellow cloth and the red cloth that you had?

S2: yes, that's not…we were actually talking about that on Monday, that…in spiriticism there has been a mix of…everything is spiritual, everything is spiritual, Santeria, Palo, all that, but in my belief we don't use…we use a white cloth, that's what the spirit told me a long time ago, that I could clean with a white cloth…so in things in Orishas or Santeria or African spiriticism…since I'm the son of Oshun…

CH: So you have to use yellow.

S2: I have to use yellow because I'm her son, so it's something like to help or to represent her…her power and since Elsa is Chango she has to use her handkerchief and since the black man always used his handkerchief red she has to use red, so it represents her…like I told you if I work with the spirit of a Gypsy then I cant go around with Gypsy stuff because I'm no longer working the spiritual I'm no longer a spiritist…so we in spiritism work with a white candle with water, (la colonia) the lotion, but with herbs, herbs become a mix of…like I said a mixture of Indigenous stuff with White customs so it's the same with what is going on now, it's a change…a mixture of African with things of everything, it's becoming very mixed…because we…well of course the Indigenous was always spiritual with it's herbs, for everything he always, for all his ceremonies had to see herbs because it's an element…water is an element…Incense was an element, it was something to praise to…so it's not very…

CH: Yes things change when people…

S2: Yes so there are things that like I told them at Misa that we…my belief is that I cant use a cigar, but know I am because it is a mix…not even liquor

CH: You can't use liquor?

S2: In our customs we don't use liquor nor cigar, because how are you going to give a spirit…if it's a spirit with light, if it is a spirit with light it wont ask you for liquor or tobacco because he's not a living spirit.

CH: And if he's not a spirit with light then he'll ask for liquor and tobacco?

S2: Yes, he will…if he's a spirit of light he'll ask you for light because it's something that pleases him…but when you start with the tobacco and liquor then those things are not very elevated…they can help you but are not very elevated.

CH: There is a Hierarchy?

S2: Yes, so there are sometimes some spirits that don't have the power or have not been educated…it's like in life we have a school were we are educated, it's many times all so confusing but the more you do it the more you understand…

CH: It's another life!

S2: It's another life, Yes

CH: I also wanted to ask you, Elsa, you guys used to say that she was not able to use holy water, why is it because she has a different religion?

S2: It's a different religion, she can't use holy water

CH: But she can use the water with the flowers?

S2: Yes,

CH: So…they asked my cousin if he had heart palpitations and he said no but I remember that when we were small I heard people talk about something about his heart, I don't know if he got mad a lot or just something with his heart, but I remembered later after it all had transpired because I got home with that on my mind.

Woman's voice: …(inaudible)… All about the…your cousin…a lot of people like to reveal it in front of people but I said when you hit a sore spot where you don't think about it or you don't want to think about it…

CH: I think maybe he had a little sore spot…Oh another thing I'd like to ask you is, why cant you cross your legs or your arms?

S2: Because you are pushing away…

CH: What you are told?

S2: the vibration, you are making an obstacle…you don't want…you have to be open because the Buddhist or the…Hindu or something, when they are meditating or making some chant…

CH: I think it's the Hindu

S2: so when…

CH: It's the Hindu, yes, because it's like yoga

S2: Yes…..

CH: so is always like a meditation?

S2: yes, when you are doing that you have to be like that because you are open, you are opening…to be more scientific, like the met physicist would say you are opening your "Chakras" so…that's the meaning

CH: So from here I'll just say the name of some ailment and you can tell me what you would recommend for it. For example stomach ache:

S2: First off we need to know if its cholic, something you ate, could be 'chamomile' (manzanilla), Luz de Estrella (starlight) [note: literal translation], mint (menta)

CH: Let's say it's a cholic.

S2: For a cholic what is recommended is chamomile (manzanilla) with (Luz de Estrella)

CH: In a tea?

S2: yes

CH: And if it was indigestion?

S2: You could drink "Lemon Grass" (te de limon) that helps you or mint (menta) helps too.

CH: Empacho?

S2: For empacho what I recommend the most is Olive Oil (aceite de olivo), it's preferable to toast it a little with a few garlic chunks and you drink it…you have to have an orange ready for them to suck on and from that you repeat it and when you keep doing that it will all loosen up…many people have a misconception of olive oil, they think that it will provoke diarrhea, but that's a lie it will never give you diarrhea it will clean you it wont give you diarrhea. If you are vomiting and you have diarrhea and it wont stop then you take olive oil and it will stop that because it stops infection!

CH: That's why when one is small they give you a purgative (purgante) and that's only olive oil (aceite de olivo)…

S2: or they could even give you Castor Oil (aceite de castor), that's usually better.

CH: Yeah me and the lady where talking about that.

S2: That's better because Olive oil (aceite de olivo) will not provoke…

Woman's voice: What is castor oil made of?

CH: Fish

S2: Fish and I don't know what else.

CH: Yes, because my mom would give that to us and Bacchalau Oil (aceite de bacchalau) as well…let me see for a cough (tos)?

S2: "Gordo Lobo" (Mullen Flowers [note: phonetic spelling]) that you give to decongest the chest but it's very dangerous because you cant take that with cold things, you drink it with honey, but after you do you have to keep your chest covered and not take any cold things…you could also take Eucalyptus (eucalipto) you can cook it until its dry…but it's something hot….there are many cures there is Oregano (oregano with a purple onion (cebolla morada) you can make an elixir of all that, but these are all things that are a bit hot that I don't like to recommend because if people are not careful you can get them even sicker

CH: Because it's hot?

S2: yes

CH: But for example, Oregano with purple Onion (cebolla morada) you make like a tea out of it?

S2: Yes you make a tea, an elixir, you put that to boil until it concentrates itself…you can add brown sugar (azucar morena) to it or honey (miel) to sweeten it.

CH: you boil it until…

S2: it's concentrated

CH: For Nerves?

S2: for nerves I recommend the Valeriana a lot, I like more with…umm…there is also 'orange blossoms' (siete asares) the…but the valerian root (valeriana) I like a lot and I have some capsules from Mexico that have (paciflora) [note: phonetic spelling] and (paciflora) is real good in calming down the nerves.

CH: But the valerian root (valeriana) causes you to relax so much so that you go to sleep?

S2: You can sleep

CH: because it can help a lot with people that have Insomnia

S2: It helps you a lot and it can also help you with ulcers, it is very strong

CH: It's preferable that you drink it at night?

S2: You can drink it at any age, if you are to hyper you can take it at any time…like this one already comes together with (Paciflora) and 'lime tree' (Tilo) it's already mixed, so this a compound where you can take two pills and you get better…if you have palpitations of the heart too or are under a lot of pressure.

CH: The tea I bought last time has allowed me to sleep…for fever?

S2: For fever there is a tree we call Fresno (Ash tree) and English it's called Asen or Ashen and it's very good it's for a person that has a high fever that wont go down, you bathe with it or you get an enema with it and very quickly the fever drops with that herb or you could bathe him with orange leafs (hojas de naranjo)…

CH: do you have to warm up those leaves?

S2: Boil them

CH: And of the Fresno (ash tree) also?

S2: You can do it together or separate

CH: Together or separate…

S2: you boil the water and you put the leaves in to make the bath (baño) or you give them a tea (té)…that's very effective.

CH: for pain in the ear?

S2: There is a tree that is (flomeria [phonetic spelling]), the Hawaiians use it a lot, you use that for ear aches, you put it on a little cotton…either the flower itself or a little sap from the tree…you know the little milky secretion of the tree you put that on a cotton (or the flower itself goes on the cotton)

CH: Do you have any other remedies for diarrhea?

S2: For that there are many you can use the (guava tree leaf) (hoja de Guayavo) made into a tea, coconut water (agua de coco), The guava tree leaf (hoja de Guayavo) is good because it's an astringent so it cures the intestine…it helps the membrane to heal.

CH: When you were explaining to me about massaging the womb?

S2: That's for someone who fell, lifted something heavy, or the person wants to have babies but cant conceive it's recommended that they massage her womb, it could be that she may have it to low or out of place so when it is out of place the baby could have problems

CH: are there many women like that?

S2: yes with many problems

CH: Have you cured burns?

S2: for burns the best thing is…is…is…(Tepescoguite) that's the name of the tree…that's in a dialect but translated to Spanish it means "Tree of the Skin" with this tree if you put the sap of it or the bark of it ground up on your burn your skin will reconstruct itself

CH: My brother got burned recently and he had a big, like a boil left behind and it's gone but he still has a little bit…

S2: the cream of the Tepescoguite

CH: also aloe (savila) right?

S2: Yes, but Tepescoguite is better because it reconstructs your skin, it's been proven scientifically with third degree burns, it makes it grow more.

CH: In El Salvador and in many Latin American there are many problems with parasites (parasitos) in the intestine, here have you seen people with that problem?

S2: No

CH: You massage (sobar[note: verb form])? If maybe someone was injured at work?

S2: No because that could be getting yourself into some problem, I don't massage I recommend they go with someone they know…because if you begin to massage the womb you can be engulfed in problems and here it's all about suing! See for massaging you sometimes have to treat people naked so…I…

CH: Elsa knows how to massage?

S2: not to my knowledge

CH: But you do know people that are massagers (sobadores)

S2: the Womb is very delicate it has to be someone that knows how to massage that knows what they are doing!

CH: The people that you recommend are people around here?

S2: I tell them that I don't know the person I only know of them. I will give you the telephone number and you talk to them…when I worked they would recommend her a lot many people would so that's all I can really say…because she does a lot of other stuff but for massaging the womb I've heard she is real good.

CH: You have only this Botanica and the one in Santa Barbara right?

S2: Yes

CH: But you work…but is their another person that you have a friendship with that you recommend things to each other? And an example

S2: Well here with Jose the Black one.

CH: Have you been here for a long time?

S2: 5 years

CH: and the one in Santa Barbara?

S2: It's new.

CH: It's very weird isn't it because there are no Botanicas over there.

S2: there are none.

CH: Have you seen other Botanicas around here for example this one here, the Venus one…

S2: that's new! The oldest ones are Jose the black one, The Indian, he only gives advise he doesn't sell products and myself are the oldest here in the area.

CH: Have you seen other Botanicas that maybe weren't successful?

S2: Several

CH: in this local? Like how many?

S2: there were some here and some over by that street, another on Alvarado and Sunset…

CH: Have you seen a change in the racial make-up of your clientele?

S2: It's usually the same, Latino and Anglo and…Afro-Americans, well for African Americans that's their culture, the Anglo is sometimes more a believer than the Latino because this is part of his traditions of his beliefs but the Anglo…his way of doing things may be different but it all amounts to the something…